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ABSTRACT

This publication reports on a hearing concerning the relationship between educational reform and the educational problems of Black and Latino students in Los Angeles County. Findings include the following: (1) while over 70 percent of students countywide are minority group members, fewer than 30 percent of teachers are from these groups; (2) most poor students and students of color lack access to resources that are believed to make a difference in learning; (3) with rare exceptions, students placed in low-ability groups continue in these groups and drop out at alarming rates; (4) school reform has emphasized college preparation at the expense of students who pursue occupational training, enter military service, or immediately seek jobs; (5) the need to teach English to students while simultaneously keeping them on an academic par with their age group has increased dramatically with recent immigration; (6) the few model classrooms and schools in communities of color are mostly experimental and benefit a very limited number of students; and (7) despite school reform efforts, Black and Latino students continue to achieve at lower levels than their White counterparts. Eight recommendations to local school districts are presented. Appendixes include a list of presenters and Los Angeles Unified School District Core Team tenets and recommendations. (AF)

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THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL REFORM ON BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Report on a Public Hearing by the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

June 1989

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Report on a Public Hearing by the
Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

June 1989

Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
320 West Temple Street, Suite 1184
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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I. INTRODUCTION

On January 26, 1989 the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations held a public hearing on "The Effects of School Reform on Black and Latino Students in Los Angeles County."

The Commission undertook the hearing because achievement levels for Black and Latino students remain low and dropout levels remain high, despite educational reform efforts. Professional educators and community leaders have raised critical questions about the relationship between educational reform and the educational problems of Black and Latino students in the County. If these questions are not answered, and if there is not substantial improvement in the education of these students, the County will face even greater economic, human, and intergroup problems in the years ahead.

The Human Relations Commission's 1984 "McCone Revisited" hearing demonstrated that of the recommendations made by the Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots (the McCone Commission) those concerning education were generally neglected for 19 years. Although there have been some educational gains by some Black students, the achievement and graduation levels for most Blacks have remained exceedingly low, and Black college and professional school enrollment has declined in recent years.

Conditions for Latinos are perhaps even worse. Latino public school enrollment in Los Angeles County is now near 50 percent of the total. By the third grade 80 percent of English-proficient Latinos are academically below grade level; 50 percent do not graduate from high school, and only 7 percent who enter college are likely to get a degree.

The Commission sought to evaluate the relationship between educational reform and student performance in Los Angeles County, focusing specifically on the educational achievement of Black and Latino students.

The hearing was held in Mark Taper Hall, State Museum of Science and Industry, Los Angeles. The Commission heard from 12 administrators, teachers, education researchers, and community and civil rights advocates. Speakers' names and affiliations are listed in the Appendix.

Chapter III of this report is a summary of the key points made by speakers. Views recorded are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

Written and tape-recorded testimonies and submittals are on file at the Human Relations Commission office and are available on request.

II. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. FINDINGS

1. Over 70 percent of students Countywide are Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islanders, or American Indian, while fewer than 30 percent of teachers are from these groups.

2. Most poor students and students of color lack access to resources that are believed to make a difference in learning: quality teachers, ample instructional time, challenging curricula, conducive facilities, and motivational influence.

3. With rare exception students placed in low ability groups continue in these groups year after year and drop out at alarming rates.

4. School reform has emphasized preparation for college at the expense of students who pursue occupational training, enter military service, or immediately seek jobs.

5. The need to teach English to students while simultaneously keeping them on an academic par with their age group has increased dramatically with recent immigration, and will soon become urgent.

6. The few model classrooms and model schools in communities of color are mostly experimental, and benefit a very limited number of students.

7. Despite school reform efforts, Black and Latino students continue to achieve at levels lower than those of their White counterparts.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Solutions for the problems identified at the hearing lie primarily within the purview of local school districts. The Commission therefore, addresses the following recommendations to these districts, urging them to:

1. Recruit and retain teachers who are sensitive to and can effectively address the needs of Black and Latino students.

2. Provide equitable resources to predominantly Black and Latino schools, i.e. sufficient dollars, experienced teachers and adequate physical facilities.

3. Discontinue grouping of students on the basis of early test scores.

4. Balance college preparation with preparation for occupational training and/or immediate employment.

5. Meet the unique needs of students with limited English proficiency.

6. Analyze successful model classrooms and model schools in communities of color and replicate their policies and practices wherever feasible.

7. Include Black and Latino parents in every phase of program planning and implementation at the school site level.

8. Revise curricula to reflect the unique needs of Black and Latino students.

In addition, the Commission commends the Los Angeles Unified School District and its Core Team for forthrightly addressing issues of inequity in education, and endorses the Core Team's Tenets and Recommendations. (Appendix B)

III. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

A. BACKGROUND

The Student Population

According to the County Office of Education over 70 percent of the County's kindergarten through twelfth grade students are Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islanders, or American Indian. These groups are already the majority in the County population, and will be the majority in the State by 1990.

Forty-five percent of the State's Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are in Los Angeles County schools. Between 1982 and 1987 the number of LEP students in Los Angeles County increased more than 36 percent. Spanish speaking students compose the largest County LEP group, at over 80 percent of the total.

Of the County's teachers, 71 percent are non-Latino Whites. Approximately 13 percent are Black, and 9 percent are Latino.

As California undergoes rapid demographic change, said Dr. Shirley Thornton, State Deputy Superintendent of Instruction for Specialized Programs, public schools will see an increase in "at-risk" students. The State Education Code defines at-risk as high risk pupils who are susceptible to frequent absenteeism, truancy, or tardiness; or who have potential to drop out of school for, among other factors, pregnancy or marriage, financial needs, dislike of school, classes, or teachers, lack of basic skills, disciplinary problems, low self-esteem, emotional or physical problems, or feelings of alienation.

Statewide attrition among Latino students between grade 10 and high school graduation is reported at 45 percent; among Black students it is 48 percent. Elizabeth Guillen, Staff Attorney for the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education fund (MALDEF), believes the actual overall Latino dropout rate is between 50 percent and 70 percent. She reported that while in the State Assembly, Los Angeles City Councilwoman Gloria Molina repeatedly proposed legislation requiring schools to collect data on dropouts. Those bills failed passage.

According to Guillen, school districts do not want to keep track of dropouts because doing so would reduce enrollment figures (average daily attendance), and with them school funding.

School Reform Measures

War on Poverty legislation, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, provided Federal financial assistance to school districts with educationally disadvantaged and poverty level students to compensate for conditions leading to low academic achievement. This program, now known as Chapter I of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act, continues.

The needs that Chapter I funds were meant to remedy have not diminished, said Alfred Moore, Deputy Superintendent, Educational Services, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). In fact, with the influx of immigrants with special learning problems, the needs are even greater.

Holly Johnston, Specialist, Program Research and Development Division of Adult and Occupational Education, LAUSD, added that during the 1970's the California public education system faced high inflation, dropping enrollment, and reduced tax support under Proposition 13. The study, A Nation at Risk: the Imperative for Education Reform, by the National Commission for Excellence in Education, found that a rising tide of mediocrity in urban education threatened the nation's future.

In the early 1980's, said Moore, a State study documented an erosion in the school curriculum. Elective subjects had replaced many academic courses; student exposure to mathematics, science, and social studies had dropped; the courses taken to graduate from high school failed to comprise a comprehensive body of knowledge.

In 1982 a series of local, State, and national reports called for reform of elementary and secondary education. The California Business Roundtable, the Los Angeles Educational Partnership, the Carnegie Foundation, and A Nation at Risk all called for broad reforms in California schools.

With reference to achievement differences between population groups, A Nation at Risk said, "Part of what is at risk is the promise first made on this continent. All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost."

Within 18 months of the report, major reform efforts were underway in most states. In 1983 California's Governor and State Legislature approved a set of education reforms

aimed at providing more resources for public schools and setting higher standards.

One legislative measure, S.B. 813, contained 30 education policy and program reforms and appropriated an additional $1 billion annually. Among other changes, course requirements for high school graduation were increased, curriculum guidelines and textbook reviews were made more rigorous, teacher training was improved, and teacher pay increased. Public postsecondary education, too, tightened up its policies, setting higher admission standards for public colleges and universities.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction established a school accountability framework, school Report Cards (which assess performance of local schools), and California Assessment Program testing.

S.B. 813 targeted both the regular curriculum and traditional categorical programs for low achieving, low income, and limited English proficient students.

The reform effort, said Moore, has refocused regulations and streamlined their administrative structures. It now requires services for students with special needs, e.g. reading, math, or language deficits, to be helped to master the regular curriculum, not a different curriculum. Educational program quality review has been shifted from the State to local district officers. Responsibility for determining how the broad curriculum and services for special needs would be tailored to local site and district needs was also delegated to the local level.

A recent LAUSD evaluation of integration activities and a Priorities for Education Report concluded that the LAUSD was not providing all of its students with the opportunity for equal access and achievement of the curriculum. In response LAUSD established a "Core Team" of teachers and administrators to develop a plan of action for addressing educational goals. The Core Team report, which was in draft form at the time of the hearing, concurred with much of the hearing testimony and proposed specific strategies to correct inequities (see Appendix B).

Unfinished Business

In 1988 the Achievement Council, a non-profit organization aimed at increasing academic achievement among minority and low-income students in California, published Unfinished Business. The Council reported that for many

years there had been a high correlation between ethnicity and low achievement.

Currently, said the Achievement Council, in the absence of long-range policy making, California seems destined to continue spending more and more on the consequences of its failure to educate young people. These consequences include more corrections and probation costs, more police and welfare costs, more indigent health care and low-income housing subsidies. As more is spent on the consequences, less will be left for education, and a vicious cycle of failure is created, said the Council.

B. ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Dr. Ray Castro, Director of Education Policy Research, Tomas Rivera Center, believes that decisions about public school financing are, for the most part, political decisions. Schools, he said, are viewed from the perspective of economic utility. National competitiveness is the current concern.

Dr. Castro questioned why equity issues have taken a back seat to proposals for school reform. He believes that society is concerned with costs rather than with addressing social and economic forces that have created the problems and are critical to their solutions.

Several speakers agreed with Dr. Castro that cost is the major consideration in providing programs for poor and minority students. Educational costs must be compared with other costs such as welfare, unemployment, law enforcement, and incarceration. Dr. Juliette Henry, of the California Teachers Association Board of Directors, noted that it costs three to four times more to keep an individual in prison than to keep a child in school.

There is a clear trend toward defining excellence in terms of economic utility, said Dr. Castro. Students who are not headed for college are seen as less important, a human resource only for the non-professional job market. Dr. Castro believes that this issue is insidious because the economic advantage from high school graduation for Blacks and Latinos does not come close to that enjoyed by Whites.

The Achievement Council Report, Unfinished Business, states that over the next two decades most new jobs available in California will require education beyond high school. Currently fewer than 40 percent of young people enter college and many of these do not graduate. Among students of color, college entry and completion

rates are even lower. According to the report, if these trends continue, many jobs requiring college education will be unfilled, minority unemployment will increase, and many employers may have to consider moving out of the State.

Presenters concurred that excellence in education for all students is costly, but that in the long run the costs of inferior education are even greater.

C. EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY

Access to Resources

Speakers agreed that excellence and standards are essential. Dr. Castro asserted, however, that in the past emphasis on excellence and standards has not broadened opportunities, but has instead fostered social and economic isolation and exclusion of disenfranchised groups.

Dr. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Co-Chair, Black Leadership Coalition on Education, charged that the reform movement has paid inadequate attention to the issues of equity and justice for students of color. Other presenters concurred with this assessment.

Dr. Thornton testified that there is a growing consensus among parents and teachers, education administrators, and the business community that all students are entitled to a richer, more challenging core curriculum that includes basic survival skills -- reading, math, language, science, social studies, art, music, and physical education.

A recent study by the State Department of Education, however, indicates that students placed in lower educational tracks do not have the same access to the core curriculum as students in other tracks. ("Tracking" is the grouping of students presumed to be of similar ability on the basis of their early test scores.) At-risk students, grouped together, receive fewer hours of instruction per day in the areas of math, science, and English. They seldom take more advanced level courses and therefore remain locked in these lower educational tracks. These students are dropping out at alarming rates.

The January 1989 issue of Kappan Magazine, a publication of the education honor society, Phi Delta Kappa, reports that the physical condition of many, if not most, urban school buildings indicates an attitude of neglect for inner-city schools and impairs the learning process.

Unfinished Business reports that poor and minority students receive less of everything that is believed to make a difference -- less experienced and well-trained teachers, less instructional time, less rich and well-balanced curricula, less well-equipped facilities, and less of what may be most important, a belief by educators that the students can really learn. It noted that poor and minority parents and communities have less, too -- less knowledge of how the educational system works, less ability to help with homework, less money to finance educational tools and experiences, less stability in the neighborhood, fewer models of success, and insufficient revenue streams.

Testimony of many presenters supported these contentions. Low achievement scores and high dropout rates, they said, are symptoms of this disparity in resource allocation.

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) and a number of other organizations have filed suit against the LAUSD on behalf of Latino and Black taxpayers and parents of school children. The lawsuit charges unequal distribution of financial resources within the school district. Three distinct resources are targeted: money, teachers, and physical facilities, e.g. less money spent per pupil, overcrowded and year-round schools, and less experienced teachers.

The age and condition of schools, the fact they are overcrowded, and the fact that they are on the year-round school system are not in themselves indications of an unequal distribution, said Elizabeth Guillen of MALDEF. Year-round schools, however, are almost exclusively in the Eastern portion of the Los Angeles Unified School District, where a disproportionate number of students of color attend school. When the year-round school system was proposed district-wide, said Guillen, White parents protested and the District postponed its decision.

Not only do teachers in schools with predominantly poor students and students of color have less training and less experience, many do not have teaching credentials, and a relatively high percentage are substitute teachers. Guillen charges that these disparities contribute to low student achievement and impose additional disabilities on students who frequently have greater needs.

Dr. Juliette Henry of the California Teachers Association cited a report, The New Improved Sorting Machine, which identified five levels of schools, the highest level serving primarily White upper class students, and the bottom two levels serving about 70 percent of all high

school students, most of whom are low-income Blacks and Latinos.

Related Issues

Presenters agreed that educational reform for Blacks and Latinos must be viewed in the context of an environment that is increasingly dangerous. According to the Los Angeles Police Department, most gang-related shootings and stabbings occur within a six block radius of a school.

Katrina Bias, Director, Los Angeles Initiative, the Achievement Council, believes, however, that problems with family, community, drugs, gangs, and poverty, need not automatically prevent a successful education. She suggested that the achievement gap between poor and minority students and their White counterparts may be due to tracking and the "hardness" of tracks. Tracks for students are set early and, she said, are usually hard and fast.

Bilingual Education

Many students today are put in schools where they do not understand the language spoken by their teachers. This, said Guillen, is the equivalent of giving them no education at all.

There is a tendency, she said, to think that bilingual education is no longer necessary or required under State and Federal law since Proposition 63 made English "the official language" of California. This is not true.

The Equal Education Opportunities Act prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity or failing to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students. School districts must provide some type of program that addresses the problems of non-English speaking and limited English speaking students.

A landmark Federal Court decision (Casteneda v. Pickard) set guidelines for language barrier programs. A school district's obligation is to see that students whose proficiency in English is limited are achieving at the same level as their native English speaking classmates. The intent of bilingual education, said Chuck Acosta, Coordinator, Bilingual Education, Los Angeles County Office of Education, is to teach children English while simultaneously keeping them on an academic par with their age group. The need for bilingual education becomes more urgent with increased immigration.

D. ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL REFORM

Across the nation the primary consumers of public education at elementary and secondary levels are persons of color. Many speakers agreed that the educational system has consistently failed these consumers. If reform is to be meaningful, they said, its proponents must reassess whether its policies and strategies are largely designed to accomodate a student population that no longer exists.

A consensus of speakers believed that educational reform has benefited most those who need it least -- White, suburban, affluent students. Several speakers reported that we already know what we need to know to make a difference in educating all students. The question now is whether their education is important enough that we will deal with all the barriers and go about the task.

The Achievement Council reports that it is not possible to say with certainty how particular reforms have influenced trends in student achievement. Some Statewide indicators are up. These include overall test scores, academic course enrollment, and students taking college entrance tests.

All presenters agreed, however, that students of color are still performing at lower levels than are White students. Dr. Shirley Thornton of the State Department of Education noted that among the bottom achievement groups, teachers do not teach the standard curriculum. They also do not have staff development resources, strong leadership by principals, and team building.

Unfinished Business noted that Black and Latino students consistently perform below other students regardless of whether they attended predominantly White or predominantly minority schools. In the primary grades Blacks and Latinos on average perform about six months behind other students. By the twelfth grade the gap grows to about three years, so that Black and Latino seniors have skill levels roughly equivalent to those of White students who are beginning grade nine.

According to Unfinished Business, in many California school districts Black and Latino students also earn report card grades far below those of their counterparts, are less likely to enroll in college preparatory courses, and are less likely to take college admissions tests.

While the State attrition rate (students who do not complete high school) for Blacks and Latinos is almost 50

percent, at many high schools with large minority enrollments it is closer to 70 percent. Even for those who do graduate, very few become eligible for college and fewer still will graduate.

On the whole, the achievement gap between Black and Latino students and other students remains enormous.

Reform, said Dr. Castro, should not be a prescription; it should be a process of discovery. Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), a university research center focusing on issues of State education policy and practices, found that students with special learning needs -- those who are poor, limited English speaking, in need of remedial education, and at-risk of dropping out -- do receive increased service. Those services, however, were of a type that produced insufficient levels of academic achievement in the past. Schools sampled in the PACE study lacked sufficient strategies for mounting more effective interventions, said Dr. Castro.

E. POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The LAUSD Core Team's draft report declares that the District must confront and eliminate both the examples and the results of "institutional racism" if educational efforts are to result in academic success.

The report states that institutional racism exists when students of color are placed in less rigorous academic programs, are taught below their critical thinking level, and are held to standards and expectations below those that they can attain. The tenets of the report are intended to begin the elimination of harmful effects of institutional racism and bring about high levels of achievement for all children.

Speakers agreed that there are successful model classrooms and model schools, but that they benefit a limited number of students. Classes and schools in which average students succeed are characterized by high level of expectations for students; clear goals and objectives; clear discipline code; collaboration among faculty, staff, administration, and community; a strong principal; qualified, sensitive teachers; rigorous core curricula; clear, strong, visible administrators; and consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Speakers agreed that in order to learn, students must believe that they can learn. Teachers must share that belief.

Minority children often perform poorly in school not because they lack basic intellectual capacities or specific learning skills, but because they have low expectations, feel helpless, lack interest, or give up in the face of potential failure, said Dr. Sandra Graham, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology, UCLA. Students of low ability perceive their condition to be chronic and uncontrollable. They believe that they can not alter the course of failure. These motivational concerns, said Dr. Graham, are as important to academic achievement as are cognitive processes.

Speakers agreed that many times well-meaning teachers give poor and minority students watered-down curricula and less challenging assignments and texts. Teachers need to be made aware that such practices can be interpreted by students to mean that they have limited ability. Although presentation techniques may differ, said Elizabeth Norwood, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services, Compton Unified School District, all students should be exposed to the same curriculum.

Speakers agreed that community involvement and scrutiny of school leadership are essential to raising achievement levels. Partnerships must be established between parents, community-based organizations, and local businesses. Parental involvement is essential. Dr. Thornton suggested that local businesses motivate at-risk students by giving them meaningful part-time employment and scholarships upon completion of high school.

The Tomas Rivera Center, a privately-funded policy and analysis group, has focused its efforts on student-adult relationships and especially on quality teachers from ethnic communities. Teachers are the most critical resource in creating change, said Dr. Castro. They must be better prepared, and must be models of self respect.

Other speakers agreed that there is a shortage of skilled teachers in minority community schools. In addition, teachers have little time to discuss how to deal with problems and needs including turnover, planning, community, and languages, they said.

F. NON-COLLEGE STUDENTS

Holly Johnston of LAUSD testified that educational reforms have emphasized academic excellence and have not benefited non-college bound students. Approximately 75 percent of the enrollment in the County Office of Education's Occupational Preparation Division is comprised of students of color.

Johnston opposed the segmentation of education and training resources into various education, government, labor, and community organizations. Each program, she said, is created for a specific target population and has discrete eligibility requirements, administrative orders, and program designs. Programs lack consistent accountability standards. This delivery system does not pursue a common objective through a unified strategy.

Johnston endorsed recommendations from the Business Roundtable and the Industry Education Council of California, the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the Los Angeles Community College District. These recommendations include: a core curriculum for all students; a career education program that would expose students to career and social realities, including cooperative education, internships and apprenticeships; and a revitalized career vocational education program.

Numerous reports discuss the mismatch between employer needs and the skills of the current and emerging workforce. Service industries are expected to increase greatly and will represent the majority of new jobs and wealth. Some researchers expect new jobs to demand higher skill levels and some form of postsecondary education, although not necessarily college education. Companies will need employees with communication skills; problem-solving skills; and interpersonal skills, including the ability to adapt to a multicultural workplace.

Employers are reportedly expressing great concern regarding job applicants' lack of basic reading, comprehension, and math skills, inadequate work maturity, and discipline.

Not all researchers, however, agree that new jobs will require higher job skills. For example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects high ratios of semi-skilled jobs compared to white collar jobs.

The educational reform movement, said Clell Hoffman, Director, Occupational Preparation, Los Angeles County Office of Education, will not continue to work if occupational training is eliminated from high schools. He recommended integrating occupational training with basic skills upgrading.

PRESENTERS

SCHEDULED SPEAKERS

Chuck Acosta
Coordinator, Bilingual Education
Los Angeles County Office of Education

Katrina Bias
Director, Los Angeles Initiative
The Achievement Council

Dr. Ray Castro
Director, Education Policy Research
Tomas Rivera Center

Dr. Sandra Graham
Associate Professor, Educational Psychology,
Graduate School of Education
University of California, Los Angeles

Elizabeth Guillen
Staff Attorney
Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Dr. Juliette Henry
Board of Directors
California Teachers Association

Clell Hoffman
Director, Occupational Preparation
Los Angeles County Office of Education

Holly Johnston
Specialist, Program Research and Development Division of
Adult & Occupational Education
Los Angeles Unified School District

Alfred Moore
Deputy Superintendent, School Operations
Los Angeles Unified School District

Elizabeth Norwood
Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
Compton Unified School District

Dr. Mark Ridley-Thomas
Co-Chair
Black Leadership Coalition on Education

Dr. Shirley Thornton
Deputy Superintendent of Instruction,
Specialized Programs Branch
California State Department of Education

Los Angeles Unified School District
Core Team Action Plan

TENETS

EVERY CHILD IS AN ABLE LEARNER.

It is not incumbent upon the child to prove that he or she is capable of learning, rather it is incumbent upon the District to prove that it can teach every student. Each child deserves a full measure of expectation, planning and instruction in a learning environment that enhances the pupil's self-image and self-worth.

> Until all children, regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex or handicap are accepted as capable learners and are educated with the same high expectations and outcomes, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S POTENTIAL FOR EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS BEGINS BEFORE BIRTH.

The District must ensure, through all means necessary, the affective, cognitive, and physical development of every child from conception through the school-age years.

> Until all prospective and current District students have access to the prenatal, infant, early childhood and school-age services required for success, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S ACHIEVEMENT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH EMPLOYEE OF THIS DISTRICT.

The Board of Education and every staff member of this District must support the cognitive, affective, and physical development of every child as demonstrated by the actions taken in making decisions and in implementing procedures.

> Until all District employees perceive themselves as personally responsible for every child's achievment, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT REQUIRES COMPETENT, CARING, WELL-TRAINED TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO MEET THE HIGHEST CERTIFICATION STANDARDS.

The District, through its selection, staffing, training, and evaluation process, must guarantee that high standards of

certification and practice are met and maintained by every teacher and every administrator.

> Until all students have teachers who are effective practitioners, and administrators who are skilled instructional leaders, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD IS EMPOWERED TO ACHIEVE THROUGH A RICH, CONCEPT-BASED AND CONTENT-DRIVEN CURRICULUM.

The District must develop an elementary curriculum which is based upon the California State Frameworks and emphasizes language development and essential concepts derived from rigorous and delineated content. This curriculum must reflect the accurate portrayal of the cultures and races which constitute this society and must stress appreciation for each child's heritage.

> Until all children in every classroom learn essential concepts and content of the enriched curriculum, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM IS MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION ARE USED TO REFINE POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT IMPACT ACHIEVEMENT.

The primary purpose of monitoring, assessment, and evaluation must be to improve instruction for the individual student. These processes must be multifaceted. Use of test data to gauge school and district progress toward academic goals is appropriate but not sufficient. In addition to standardized and criterion-referenced tests, measures which focus on student learning styles and school climate factors must also be included.

> Until all District monitoring, assessment, and evaluation are used primarily to improve and refine instructional delivery, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S ACHIEVEMENT IS ENHANCED WHEN THE STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL IS RESPONSIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF THE CHILD.

District structure and school organization must meet the developmental and instructional needs of students.

> Until every school, unit, and office in this District is structured to support and promote each child's educational and social growth, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S ACHIEVEMENT IS FACILITATED WHEN EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT DISTRICT POLICIES ARE MADE AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL SITE.

Decisions that affect achievement must be made at the local school site. Those persons at the local school site are in the best position to know the child and the learning conditions that influence the child's achievement. The local school site, its personnel and parents, must have both the autonomy and authority to act in the educational interests of the child within the boundaries of District policy.

> Until all implementation decisions affecting the achievement of individual students are made at the local school site, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS ACCELERATED WHEN DECISION-MAKING IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY.

Decision-making at the local school site must occur through a cooperative process involving the principal, teachers, other staff members, and parents. The principal must facilitate this process. All participants must have authority and be responsible for decisions affecting the child's educational development.

> Until all administrators, teachers, other staff members, and parents work collaboratively to promote the child's educational development, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S POTENTIAL FOR EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS IS STRENGTHENED WHEN PARENTS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE.

The school and the parent must share responsibility for educating, nurturing, and socializing the child.

> Until all parents and educators perceive themselves as partners in the child's development with shared responsibilities for successful education, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S EDUCATION IS ENHANCED WHEN DISTRICT/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS HELP TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND EXPERIENCES ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS.

District partnerships with business, university, community groups, youth organizations, and governmental agencies must be maintained and expanded to increase the child's access to experiences and needed social services.

Until all students have access to the necessary services and programs that partnerships can provide, we have not accomplished our mission.

EVERY CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IS FACILITATED BY FUNDING AND RESOURCE PRIORITIES BASED ON INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS.

District funding and resource priorities must be reordered to meet the instructional needs of the child and to support the local school site services to the child. Additionally, funding to the local school must be augmented, guaranteed, provided in a timely manner, and free from restraints that impede its most expedient application for the educational good of the child.

Until all funding and resource priorities are based on sound pedagogy, we have not accomplished our mission.

Los Angeles Unified School District
Core Team Action Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish instruction of the child as the force which drives District policies organization, decision, procedures, and practices.

2. Assure equal access to and achievement of a rigorous and balanced District curriculum by all students.

3. Design and create learning environments that are socially supportive and intellectually challenging.

4. Enable students to become full participants in their own academic achievement and social development.

5. Attract, select, assign, and retain teachers, administrators and other staff who are competent and trained to carry out the mission of this District.

6. Mandate and support parent education, parent involvement, and parent participation in school governance to empower parents as partners in their child's education.

7. Provide quality, comprehensive support services at each school.

8. Reach out to the greater community to coordinate and expand services needed to support and enrich the child's education.